

II. NOAA Proposed Action

NOAA is releasing for public comment a DEIS that analyzes a proposed action to expand the FGBNMS boundary to include additional bank and reef areas in the northcentral Gulf of Mexico and to apply the existing sanctuary regulations and management regime to the expanded area. NOAA developed five alternatives for expanding the FGBNMS boundary. The alternatives range from taking no action to adding as much as an additional approximate 880 square miles.

NOAA's preferred alternative (Alternative 3) is the expansion of the existing boundaries from ~56 square miles to an area that encompasses ~383 square miles of waters in the northwestern Gulf of Mexico. This alternative would add 15 additional banks ranging from 70 to 120 miles off-shore that are comprised of reefs and bottom features that provide habitat for fish and other biological resources that serve as engines of sustainability for much of the Gulf of Mexico.

The proposed sanctuary expansion advances NOAA's mission to conserve and manage coastal and marine ecosystems and resources and furthers the FGBNMS mission to identify, protect, conserve, and enhance the natural and cultural resources, values, and qualities of FGBNMS and its regional environment for this and future generations. The need for the proposed sanctuary expansion is informed by widespread acute and chronic threats to marine habitat in the north central Gulf of Mexico that can most effectively be addressed through NOAA's evaluation and implementation of the comprehensive suite of habitat conservation and management actions made possible by FGBNMS expansion to ensure that valuable natural resources are available to future generations of Americans.

NOAA is seeking public comment on the DEIS which is available at <http://flowergarden.noaa.gov/> or may be obtained by contacting the individual listed under the heading **FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT**.

Authority: 16 U.S.C. 1431 *et seq.*

Dated: June 1, 2016.

John Armor,

Acting Director, Office of National Marine Sanctuaries.

[FR Doc. 2016-13661 Filed 6-9-16; 8:45 am]

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DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

RIN 0648-XE404 and 0648-XE486

Marine Mammals; File Nos. 18978 and 19768

AGENCY: National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS), National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), Commerce.

ACTION: Notice; issuance of permits.

SUMMARY: Notice is hereby given that permits have been issued to the following entities for research on marine mammal parts:

File No. 18978: Pam Miller, Alaska Community Action on Toxics, 505 West Northern Lights Blvd., Suite 205, Anchorage, AK 99503; and

File No. 19768: Evin Hildebrandt, Ph.D., University of Massachusetts Medical School, 55 Lake Avenue, S3-221, Worcester, MA 01655.

ADDRESSES: The permits and related documents are available for review upon written request or by appointment in the Permits and Conservation Division, Office of Protected Resources, NMFS, 1315 East-West Highway, Room 13705, Silver Spring, MD 20910; phone (301) 427-8401; fax (301) 713-0376.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Jennifer Skidmore or Amy Sloan, (301) 427-8401.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: On March 8, 2016 (File No. 18978; 81 FR 12075) and March 11, 2016 (File No. 19768; 81 FR 12879), notices were published in the **Federal Register** that requests for permits to conduct research on marine mammal parts had been submitted by the above-named applicants. The requested permits have been issued under the authority of the Marine Mammal Protection Act of 1972, as amended (16 U.S.C. 1361 *et seq.*), the regulations governing the taking and importing of marine mammals (50 CFR part 216), the Endangered Species Act of 1973, as amended (ESA; 16 U.S.C. 1531 *et seq.*), and the regulations governing the taking, importing, and exporting of endangered and threatened species (50 CFR parts 222-226).

File No. 18978 (Miller) authorizes the receipt and export of subsistence hunted marine mammal parts. Researchers will work with Yupik households and local hunters on St. Lawrence Island, Alaska, to obtain samples from up to 8 animals per year from ringed seal (*Pusa hispida*); bearded seal (*Erignathus barbatus*); and ribbon seal (*Histiophoca fasciata*) and 9 animals per year from bowhead whale

(*Balaena mysticetus*) and spotted seal (*Phoca largha*). Samples would be measured for contaminant levels to determine marine mammal exposure to polybrominated diphenyl ethers and perfluorinated compounds. No live animals would be affected. The permit is valid through April 30, 2021.

File No. 19768 (Hildebrandt) authorizes the receipt of cell lines from other researchers and the creation of cell lines from animal tissues obtained from the stranding network under a regional authorization letter for scientific research purposes. Up to 15 cell lines would be received or created annually from certain cetacean species. These cell lines would be used to study the evolution of endogenous viruses (viruses that integrate into the genome of the host) using the DNA and RNA sequencing. No live animals would be affected. The permit is valid through May 31, 2021.

In compliance with the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (42 U.S.C. 4321 *et seq.*), a final determination has been made that the activities proposed are categorically excluded from the requirement to prepare an environmental assessment or environmental impact statement.

As required by the ESA, issuance of these permits was based on a finding that such permits: (1) Were applied for in good faith; (2) will not operate to the disadvantage of such endangered species; and (3) are consistent with the purposes and policies set forth in section 2 of the ESA.

Dated: June 6, 2016.

Julia Harrison,

Chief, Permits and Conservation Division, Office of Protected Resources, National Marine Fisheries Service.

[FR Doc. 2016-13714 Filed 6-9-16; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 3510-22-P

DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

RIN 0648-XE619

Magnuson-Stevens Act Provisions; General Provisions for Domestic Fisheries; Application for Exempted Fishing Permits

AGENCY: National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS), National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), Commerce.

ACTION: Notice; request for comments.

SUMMARY: The Assistant Regional Administrator for Sustainable Fisheries, Greater Atlantic Region, NMFS

(Assistant Regional Administrator), has made a preliminary determination that an exempted fishing permit application contains all of the required information and warrants further consideration. This permit would allow one commercial fishing vessel to test the economic viability of using electric rod and reel gear to target pollock in the Western Gulf of Maine Closure Area, and to temporarily retain undersized catch for measurement and data collection. The privately-funded study would be conducted by a commercial fisherman as a pilot demonstration project.

Regulations under the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act require publication of this notification to provide interested parties the opportunity to comment on applications for proposed exempted fishing permits.

DATES: Comments must be received on or before June 27, 2016.

ADDRESSES: You may submit written comments by any of the following methods:

- *Email:* NMFS.GAR.EFP@noaa.gov. Include in the subject line "Comments on Rod and Reel Fishing in WGOM Closed Area EFP."

- *Mail:* John K. Bullard, Regional Administrator, NMFS, Greater Atlantic Regional Fisheries Office, 55 Great Republic Drive, Gloucester, MA 01930. Mark the outside of the envelope "Comments Rod and Reel Fishing in WGOM Closed Area EFP."

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Elizabeth Scheimer, Fisheries Management Specialist, 978-281-9236, Elizabeth.scheimer@noaa.gov.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: A commercial fisherman submitted a complete application for an exempted fishing permit (EFP) on May 4, 2016, to conduct commercial fishing activities that the regulations would otherwise restrict. The EFP would authorize one vessel to use electric rod and reel gear in the Western Gulf of Maine (GOM) Closure Area and to temporarily retain undersized catch for measurement and data collection.

The project, titled "Utilization of Electric Rod and Reel to Target Pollock in WGOM Closed Area," is privately funded by a commercial fisherman as a pilot study to test the economic viability of using electric rod and reel gear to target pollock while avoiding non-target catch. The study would take place in the Western GOM Closure Area, from June through August 2016, with one vessel planning to fish up to 5 days per month. The exemptions are necessary because groundfish vessels on commercial groundfish trips are prohibited from

fishing in the Western GOM Closure Area and from retaining undersized groundfish. The vessel would use four electric rod and reels each day and fish for at least 4 to 6 hours, with an additional 5 to 6 hours of steaming, for a total trip of approximately 12 hours. Fishing would primarily occur within the Western GOM Closure Area, in the area known as "The Fingers," with some effort being conducted outside the area. The researcher is requesting access to the Western GOM Closure Area based on his belief that pollock is concentrated in this area, and that they can be targeted with minimal catch of non-target species.

A research technician would accompany all trips that occur under this EFP to measure and document fish caught (retained and discarded), document fishing gear, bait, location, and fishing conditions to evaluate gear performance. Undersized fish would be discarded as quickly as possible after sampling. All Northeast multispecies of legal size would be landed, with all catch being attributed to the sector vessel's annual catch entitlement. Proceeds from the sales would be retained by the vessel. The participating vessel would not be exempt from any sector monitoring or reporting requirements.

If approved, the applicant may request minor modifications and extensions to the EFP throughout the year. EFP modifications and extensions may be granted without further notice if they are deemed essential to facilitate completion of the proposed research and have minimal impacts that do not change the scope or impact of the initially approved EFP request. Any fishing activity conducted outside the scope of the exempted fishing activity would be prohibited.

Authority: 16 U.S.C. 1801 *et seq.*

Dated: June 6, 2016.

Alan D. Risenhoover,
Director, Office of Sustainable Fisheries,
National Marine Fisheries Service.

[FR Doc. 2016-13728 Filed 6-9-16; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 3510-22-P

DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

United States Patent and Trademark Office

[Docket No.: PTO-P-2016-00014]

Grant of Interim Extension of the Term of U.S. Patent No. 5,912,231; LOCILEX® (pexiganan)

AGENCY: United States Patent and Trademark Office, Commerce.

ACTION: Notice of Interim Patent Term Extension.

SUMMARY: The United States Patent and Trademark Office has issued an order granting interim extension under 35 U.S.C. 156(d)(5) for a one-year interim extension of the term of U.S. Patent No. 5,912,231.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:

Mary C. Till by telephone at (571) 272-7755; by mail marked to her attention and addressed to the Commissioner for Patents, Mail Stop Hatch-Waxman PTE, P.O. Box 1450, Alexandria, VA 22313-1450; by fax marked to her attention at (571) 273-7755; or by email to Mary.Till@uspto.gov.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: Section 156 of Title 35, United States Code, generally provides that the term of a patent may be extended for a period of up to five years if the patent claims a product, or a method of making or using a product, that has been subject to certain defined regulatory review, and that the patent may be extended for interim periods of up to one year if the regulatory review is anticipated to extend beyond the expiration date of the patent.

On May 26, 2016, Scripps Research Institute, the patent owner of record, timely filed an application under 35 U.S.C. 156(d)(5) for an interim extension of the term of U.S. Patent No. 5,912,231. The patent claims a composition of the active ingredient pexiganan of the human drug product LOCILEX®. The application for patent term extension indicates that New Drug Application (NDA) 29-930 was submitted to the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) on July 24, 1998.

Review of the patent term extension application indicates that, except for permission to market or use the product commercially, the subject patent would be eligible for an extension of the patent term under 35 U.S.C. 156, and that the patent should be extended for one year as required by 35 U.S.C. 156(d)(5)(B). Because the regulatory review period will continue beyond the original expiration date of the patent, June 15, 2016, interim extension of the patent term under 35 U.S.C. 156(d)(5) is appropriate.

An interim extension under 35 U.S.C. 156(d)(5) of the term of U.S. Patent No. 5,912,231 is granted for a period of one year from the original expiration date of the patent.